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## NEWS RELEASE

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### ***School Children Join The Fight Against West Nile Virus***

Arizona school children are joining the fight against West Nile virus by competing in a poster-drawing contest sponsored by the Arizona Department of Health Services and The Phoenix Zoo.

The contest, which involves public and private school students up to age 17, is designed to educate youngsters about ways to prevent West Nile infections. The grand prize: A one-year family pass (family of four) to the Phoenix Zoo. In addition, the classroom of the winning artist will be treated to a pizza party.

“This poster contest allows us to reach students in a fun, educational format,” said Catherine Eden, Director of the Arizona Department of Health Services.

State health officials Monday reported 316 cases of West Nile virus in humans in Arizona, with four deaths. The age range of those afflicted is 1 month to 98 years.

Poster submissions should suggest ways to prevent West Nile virus infections. The best way to do that is to reduce mosquito bites by limiting outdoor activity after the sun goes down, covering exposed skin with loose fitting clothing, using insect repellent, and eliminating mosquito breeding sources in your yard and neighborhood.

All posters must be at least 8 ½" by 11" in size and may not exceed 11" by 17". All posters must be received by the Department of Health by Sept. 10, 2004. Contest entry forms can be obtained by contacting area schools directly or by contacting Craig Levy, Arizona Department of Health Services, 150 N. 18th Ave. #140, Phoenix, Arizona 85007.

The state has established a web site, [www.westnileaz.com](http://www.westnileaz.com), and a toll-free number, 1-800-314-9243, (Metro Phoenix: 602-364-4500), to provide additional information on West Nile virus.

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